

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
ARIZONA STATE OFFICE

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October 10, 1997

EMS TRANSMISSION - 10/10/97  
Instruction Memorandum No. AZ-98-001  
Expires: 09/30/99

To: Field Managers

From: State Director

Subject: Conservation Measures for Southwestern Willow Flycatcher, Cactus Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl, Kearney's Blue Star, and Pima Pineapple Cactus DD: 10/24/97

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has developed interim conservation measures which provide additional management direction for southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*), cactus ferruginous pygmy-owl (*Glaucidium brasilianum cactorum*), Kearney's blue star (*Amsonia kearneyana*), and Pima pineapple cactus (*Coryphantha scheeri* var. *robustispina*). These measures were developed in collaboration with BLM Field Offices throughout Arizona and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife (Service). The BLM transmitted these measures to the Service and Arizona BLM Field Offices in a memorandum dated June 23, 1997. In doing so, these measures were incorporated into the ongoing formal consultations on land use plans and grazing environmental impact statements. The intent of this memorandum is to formalize the adoption of the interim conservation measure for these four species. These measures will provide management direction for these species until recovery plans are developed and any necessary consultations or plan amendments are completed to incorporate recovery plan recommendations.

The management direction provided by these measures is effective immediately. While full implementation of certain measures represents an ongoing process, others have specific time frames. We recognize that implementation of several measures is currently underway. A key measure which requires full implementation before the 1998 southwestern willow flycatcher nesting season involves Habitat Management Guideline 3a., which calls for the exclusion of livestock grazing within occupied or unsurveyed, suitable habitat during the breeding season (April 1-September 1).

The interim management direction calls for the development of an action plan for southwestern willow flycatchers. The State Office would like representatives from each Field Office to

participate in the development of this Statewide action plan. This process will begin this Fall. Please provide Paul Sawyer with the name of the representative(s) from your Field Office by October 24, 1997. Paul will coordinate a date for the initial meeting with your representative(s).

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Field Offices within the range of the cactus ferruginous pygmy-owl (primarily Tucson, Phoenix, and Safford) should also identify a contact person, or persons, for coordinating actions/plans dealing with this species as well.

Thank you for your participation in developing the management direction for these species. Your interest and support of these measures will contribute greatly to the conservation and recovery of these species.

Denise P. Meridith

#### Attachments

- 1 - Interim Conservation Measures to Provide Management Direction for Southwestern Willow Flycatcher (2 pp.)
- 2 - Interim Conservation Measures to Provide Management Direction for Cactus Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl (2 pp.)
- 3 - Interim Conservation Measures to Provide Management Direction for Kearney's Blue Star (1 p.)
- 4 - Interim Conservation Measures to Provide Management Direction for Pima Pineapple Cactus (2 pp.)

Signed by:  
Robert Kritzstein  
Acting State Director

Authenticated by:  
Sandy Bausman  
Staff Assistant

cc: WO-230, LS-204  
AZ-932 Sawyer  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Phoenix

**INTERIM CONSERVATION MEASURES TO PROVIDE MANAGEMENT  
DIRECTION FOR  
SOUTHWESTERN WILLOW FLYCATCHER**

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in Arizona will develop and implement an action plan for the southwestern willow flycatcher that provides protective guidance for managing flycatcher habitat and implementing BLM-authorized activities. This action plan will provide guidance to Arizona BLM Field Offices for implementing decisions authorized in their respective planning documents (Resource Management Plans, Management and Framework Plans, and associated grazing EISs). Minimal features of the plan will include the following:

1. Mapping: Maps that convey the following information about flycatcher habitat managed by the Field Office:
  - a. Location, size, shape, and spacing of habitat areas.
  - b. Habitat stage with respect to flycatchers according to the following classification: suitable-occupied, suitable-unoccupied, suitable-unsurveyed, potential in the short term (1 to 3 years), and potential in the long-term (greater than 3 years).
  - c. Status of flycatcher surveys for each area of suitable habitat: either the date(s) surveyed or indication that the area has not been surveyed.
2. Flycatcher Surveys: A list of areas to be surveyed following the most recent U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) recommended protocol, along with the anticipated completion date for the survey of each area.
3. Habitat Management Guidelines: Management guidelines (fencing, grazing system used, or flycatcher habitat improvement activities) for areas at each of the habitat stages defined above for mapping. These guidelines should include:
  - a. Exclusion of livestock grazing within occupied or unsurveyed, suitable habitat during the breeding season (April 1-September 1).
  - b. Management of suitable flycatcher habitat so that its suitable characteristics are not eliminated or degraded.
  - c. Management of potential flycatcher habitat to allow natural regeneration (through natural processes) into suitable habitat.

4. Cowbird Control: To reduce the likelihood of nest abandonment and loss of flycatcher productivity owing to cowbird parasitism associated with BLM-authorized grazing activities in or near occupied habitats, BLM will implement the following:
  - a. Investigate and identify livestock concentration areas on BLM lands in the action areas that are likely foraging areas for brown-headed cowbirds within a 5-mile radius of occupied or unsurveyed suitable southwestern willow flycatcher habitat, and evaluate ways to reduce any concentration areas found.
  - b. If cowbird concentrations indicate a strong likelihood that parasitism to flycatcher nests is occurring or actual parasitism is documented through nest monitoring, possible cowbird foraging areas will be assessed, and appropriate control measures for cowbirds will be implemented. Evaluation of possible parasitism applies to active flycatcher nests on BLM-administered lands which are within 5 miles of BLM-authorized grazing activities. These efforts will be coordinated with the Service and the U. S. Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). Monitoring and/or control activities will be conducted by qualified personnel with appropriate permits.

**INTERIM CONSERVATION MEASURES TO PROVIDE  
MANAGEMENT DIRECTION FOR THE CACTUS FERRUGINOUS PYGMY-OWL**

1. **Habitat Description:** The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) will work with the Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), U.S. Forest Service, and Arizona Game and Fish Department in a cooperative effort to refine the Service's habitat profile and delineation of distribution for the pygmy-owl. The habitat profile will include habitat features necessary to support breeding populations for owls and a profile for the subset of Sonoran desert scrub that is likely to support cactus ferruginous pygmy-owls.
2. **Mapping:** Map suitable habitat within the planning area based on the Service's most current habitat profile and distribution map (within 3 years).
3. **Survey:** Survey for the presence of owls on BLM-administered lands over all mapped areas of suitable habitat within a time frame identified in an action plan developed in cooperation with the Service. Priorities for survey include:
  - a. Survey before any habitat disturbing activity (this applies to all suitable habitat, regardless of the status of the mapping effort described in number 2 above);
  - b. Areas in proximity to occupied or recently (within the last 10 years) occupied habitat;
  - c. Historic localities; and
  - d. Likely historic habitat, based on historic localities and the habitat profile.
4. **Habitat Management:** Maintain habitat features necessary to support breeding populations of the cactus ferruginous pygmy-owls within their historic range:
  - a. Maintain essential habitat features on suitable habitat as identified in the most current Service-approved habitat profile for the owl.
  - b. Review ongoing activities for effects on essential habitat features needed by pygmy-owls, and modify activities, where necessary, to sustain the overall suitability of the habitat for cactus ferruginous pygmy-owls. Priority will be given to activities in or near occupied or recently (within the last 10 years) occupied habitat.

5. Management direction for the cactus ferruginous pygmy owl (including such things as habitat profiles, habitat categorization, mapping, and surveys) will be reviewed with the Service annually. Adjustments will be made, as necessary, based on these findings, other new information, or accepted recovery prescriptions.

## **INTERIM CONSERVATION MEASURES TO PROVIDE MANAGEMENT FOR KEARNEY'S BLUE STAR**

1. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) will formalize its decision to eliminate livestock grazing on the Baboquivari Allotment (#6089) by December 1997.
2. BLM will work with other landowners in the Baboquivari Allotment to remove any remaining unauthorized livestock from BLM-administered lands and eliminate future unauthorized livestock use (through such things as fencing or fence maintenance) in the allotment. All reasonable measures will be taken to remove trespass cattle from BLM-administered lands as soon as possible. Initial efforts will begin in June 1997.
3. No livestock improvement projects (except facilities needed to exclude livestock on public lands), and no mechanical or chemical vegetation manipulation shall occur in the Brown Canyon Watershed within the Baboquivari Allotment for the purposes of managing livestock.
4. Planning and management for prescribed fire and wildfire suppression in the watershed of Brown Canyon shall be coordinated with the Service. The BLM, with input from the Service, shall develop a mitigation plan for each project. The mitigation plan must be agreed to and approved by both the Service and the BLM.
5. The BLM shall monitor the status of the Brown Canyon Kearney's blue star population on BLM lands at least annually. Monitoring shall include looking for evidence of trespass cattle grazing in the vicinity of the population. The BLM shall briefly report to the Service the results of that monitoring in an annual report to be delivered by March 15 following the calendar year in which the monitoring occurred. The first report shall be due March 15, 1998.

## **INTERIM CONSERVATION MEASURES TO PROVIDE MANAGEMENT FOR PIMA PINEAPPLE CACTUS**

1. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) will not authorize seeding or planting of nonnative plant species in allotments with suitable Pima pineapple cactus habitat or in adjoining allotments that could result in invasion of nonnative plants into Pima pineapple cactus habitat.
2. Construction of range improvement projects shall be preceded by surveys for Pima pineapple cactus in all areas directly or indirectly affected by the action. Areas indirectly affected may include areas within 0.5 mile of new water sources, or areas in which cattle numbers are increased due to fences or pasturing. Surveys shall be in accordance with Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) protocol. Range developments shall be planned to avoid direct impacts (death or injury) to Pima pineapple cactus as a result of construction or maintenance activities. Mitigation of indirect impacts, if any, shall be coordinated with and approved and agreed to by the Service and BLM at the project level.
3. Planning for prescribed fire and chemical or mechanical vegetation management in suitable Pima pineapple cactus habitat shall be coordinated with the Service. The BLM, with input from the Service, shall develop and implement a mitigation plan for each project. The mitigation plan shall be approved and agreed to by the Service and the BLM.
4. Allotment Management Plan (AMP) development and implementation shall be completed according to a schedule developed in coordination with the Service for allotments in the maintain category which contains suitable Pima pineapple cactus habitat.
5. Actions shall be taken to maintain range conditions in good or excellent condition on public lands in the maintain category allotments which have suitable Pima pineapple cactus habitat.
6. For allotments containing suitable Pima pineapple cactus habitat in the custodial category, the BLM will work with other landowners in the allotment to improve range condition. Actions the BLM could take with other landowners may include developing grazing strategies, planning and developing range improvement projects and vegetation management, and providing technical assistance.
7. Inventory, monitoring, and evaluations, as described in the BLM's proposed action (BLM 1996) and applicable sections of the BLM Manual, will be conducted in allotments containing suitable habitat. If Pima pineapple cactus is found in a custodial allotment, that allotment shall be reclassified as maintain or improve and the above measures that apply to maintain allotments shall be applied to such reclassified allotments. Inventory, monitoring, and evaluation activities and results shall be summarized in an annual report to the Service, due March 15 of the year following the calendar year in which such activities occurred. The first report shall be due March 15, 1998.
8. The BLM will develop a strategy plan to avoid or minimize impacts to Pima pineapple cactus derived from minerals exploration and development on BLM-administered lands. This plan will be mutually agreed upon by the Service and BLM. Plan development will be



initiated within a year from the issuance of a biological opinion on the Phoenix RMP.